

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY SANAA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

CINCEUR

USMTM DHAHRAN

S E C R E T STATE 199146

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, MASS, SA, YE

SUBJECT: SAG OFFER TO PURCHASE ARMS FOR YAR

REF: (A) JIDDA 5143 (NOTAL), (B) STATE 186483 (NOTAL),
(C) SANAA 1839, (D) SANAA 1854

KUWAIT PASS MUSCAT

1. WE ARE PLEASED SAG HAS MADE CLEAR COMMITMENT TO PURCHASE
ARMS FOR YAR AND WE WISH TO ENCOURAGE THIS DEVELOPMENT. WE
AGREE THIS SAUDI APPROACH TO MEETING YAR MILITARY REQUIRE-
MENTS A GREAT IMPROVEMENT OVER KABBANI PLAN WHICH WAS FAR
TOO AMBITIOUS IN TERMS YAR CAPABILITY TO ABSORB AND ACTUAL

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THREAT.

2. FYI, RE REF (B), USG MAY NEED TO RECONSIDER OFFERING ANTI-PERSONNEL MINES, DETAILS TO FOLLOW SEPTTEL. END FYI.

3. OUR OBJECTIVE IS TO BE RESPONSIVE TO THIS SAUDI-YAR APPROACH BUT TO CONTINUE TO WORK AS MUCH AS POSSIBLE THROUGH SAUDI ARABIA AND JORDAN. FYI, IT MUST BE UNDERSTOOD, HOWEVER, THAT MUCH HAS HAPPENED SINCE WE WERE ORIGINALLY APPROACHED CONCERNING ASSISTANCE FOR YAR. THE OCTOBER WAR AND THE RESUPPLY EFFORT FOR ISRAEL HAS PLACED HEAVY DEMANDS ON DOD ASSETS. WE HAVE ALSO BEEN FACED BY REQUEST FOR MILITARY WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT FROM OTHER STATES FOR "URGENT" DELIVERIES (JORDAN, MOROCCO, ETHIOPIA,

OTHER). THUS AVAILABILITY ON AN URGENT BASIS MAY BE A PROBLEM FOR SOME ITEMS. END FYI. WE ARE TAKING IMMEDIATE STEPS TO ASCERTAIN AVAILABILITY OF OTHER REQUESTED ITEMS.

4. SOME OF THE YAR NEEDS ARE STILL RATHER IMPRECISE, E.G., "ENGINEERING EQUIPMENT." THUS, AS A MEANS OF DEMONSTRATING A FORTHCOMING US ATTITUDE AND TO DETERMINE YAR NEEDS MORE PRECISELY, WE ARE PREPARED TO SEND A SMALL SURVEY TEAM TO YAR AS SOON AS POSSIBLE. (FYI, IN VIEW OF REQUIREMENTS OF FMS ACT, USG MUST BE IN A POSITION TO VALIDATE ADEQUATELY FORMAL REQUESTS FOR PURCHASE OF US ARMS. DOD WOULD NOT BE ABLE TO DO SO ON BASIS OF INFORMATION CURRENTLY AVAILABLE TO IT. END FYI.) WE ENVISAGE SENDING FROM TWO TO FIVE QUALIFIED US MILITARY PERSONNEL TO YAR FOR A BRIEF PERIOD TO MAKE AN ON-THE-GROUND SURVEY. (A USMTM REPRESENTATIVE FROM DHAHRAN MIGHT BE INCLUDED.) AN ADDITIONAL AND IMPORTANT ADVANTAGE IN HAVING A SMALL TEAM VISIT YAR IS THAT IT WOULD MAKE POSSIBLE USG ASSESSMENT JORDANIAN PLAN FOR REBUILDING YAR ARMED FORCES IF WE ARE ASKED TO DO SO. ALSO, IT WOULD GIVE US AN INFORMATION BASE ON WHICH TO INFLUENCE SAUDIS, YEMENIS AND JORDANIANS TO AIM AT MEETING YAR'S MINIMUM DEFENSE REQUIREMENTS AND AVOID OVERLY AMBITIOUS PROJECTS.

5. WE BELIEVE US SURVEY TEAM SHOULD COORDINATE CLOSELY WITH BOTH SAUDIS AND JORDANIANS. TEAM, FOR EXAMPLE,
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MIGHT TOUCH BASE WITH SAUDIS BEFORE GOING TO YAR AND CONSULT WITH THEM AGAIN FOLLOWING SURVEY ON WAY BACK TO CONUS. WE WOULD ANTICIPATE, IF EMBASSIES JIDDA AND SANAA CONCUR, SENDING TEAM IN LATE SEPTEMBER, OR EARLY OCTOBER. UNLESS EMBASSIES BELIEVE IT WOULD NOT BE PRACTICAL TO SEND TEAM UNTIL AFTER RAMADAN.

6. FOR ANY MATERIAL USG AGREES TO PROVIDE IT WILL BE

NECESSARY TO DECIDE WHICH WOULD BE MOST EFFECTIVE ALTERNATIVE FOR ACQUISITION: (A) BY NEW FMS CASES CONSOMMATED WITH YAR, WITH FINANCING PROVIDED BY SAG; (B) BY NEW FMS CASES CONSOMMATED WITH SAG WITH IMMEDIATE TRANSFER OF EQUIPMENT TO YAR (EITHER TRANSSHIPPED THROUGH SAUDI ARABIA OR SHIPPED DIRECTLY TO YAR); OR (C) BY IMMEDIATE SHIPMENT OF MATERIEL FROM EXISTING INVENTORIES IN SAUDI ARABIA WITH SUBSEQUENT PAYBACK FROM USG THROUGH FMS CASES CONSOMMATED WITH SAUDI ARABIA. DEPARTMENT REQUESTS POSTS' COMMENTS ON ALTERNATIVES.

7. FOR JIDDA AND SANAA: REQUEST YOUR COMMENTS INCLUDING TIMING RE DISPATCH OF SURVEY TEAM TO YAR. USMTM MAY WISH BE REPRESENTED ON TEAM WHICH WE BELIEVE SHOULD INCLUDE SANAA DATT AND REPRESENT ATIVES ARMY, NAVY, AND AIR FORCE AND PERHAPS MARINE CORPS. IF BOTH EMBASSIES CONCUR, WE WILL TRANSMIT INFORMATION AS REGARDS TEAM COMPOSITION, TIMING, PROPOSED DURATION OF SURVEY, AND TERMS OF REFERENCE. KISSINGER

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